

**LEMON GROVE CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Item No. 4
Mtg. Date March 3, 2015
Dept. City Manager's Office

Item Title: Sidewalk Incentive Pilot Program

Staff Contact: Graham Mitchell, City Manager

Recommendation:

Provide direction regarding the establishment of a sidewalk incentive pilot program.

Item Summary:

On January 6, 2015, staff presented an agenda item entitled "Sidewalk Installation Incentive Program." During this agenda item, staff presented background information about sidewalk installation and potential sidewalk installation incentive program concepts. The City Council provided direction to staff to develop a pilot program with a simple graduated match program. The purpose of the staff report (**Attachment A**) is to present a pilot program for City Council discussion and feedback.

Fiscal Impact:

None.

Environmental Review:

☒ Not subject to review

☐ Negative Declaration

☐ Categorical Exemption, Section []

☐ Mitigated Negative Declaration

Public Information:

☒ None

☐ Newsletter article

☐ Notice to property owners within 300 ft.

☐ Notice published in local newspaper

☐ Neighborhood meeting

Attachments:

A. Staff Report

LEMON GROVE CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Item No. 4

Mtg. Date March 3, 2015

Item Title: **Sidewalk Incentive Pilot Program**

Staff Contact: Graham Mitchell, City Manager

Discussion:

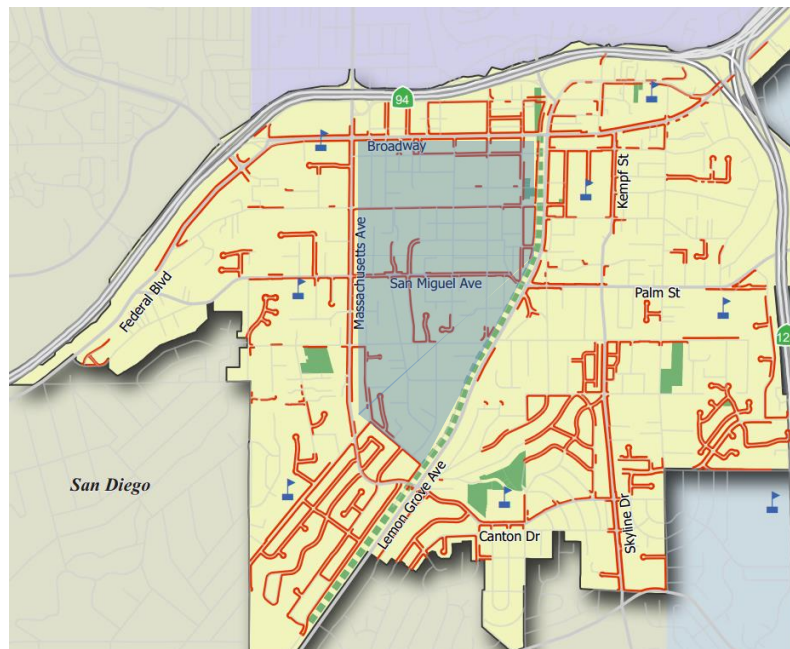
On January 6, 2015, staff presented an agenda item entitled “Sidewalk Installation Incentive Program.” During this agenda item, staff presented background information about sidewalk installation and potential sidewalk installation incentive program concepts. The City Council provided direction to staff to develop a pilot program with a simple graduated match program. The purpose of this staff report is to present a pilot program, with several identified challenges, for City Council discussion and feedback.

Pilot Program

Staff has developed two pilot sidewalk program options. The intent of the ultimate program is to encourage the development of sidewalks through private/public partnerships. The following sections identify the area of the pilot program and the two program options.

Pilot Area

The Lemon Grove Health & Wellness Element identifies the existing sidewalk network in the City. Staff believes that the area south of Broadway, between Massachusetts Avenue and Lemon Grove Avenue is an area with significant voids of sidewalk, especially along the north/south-oriented streets. Staff recommends that the pilot program focus on this area, which is generally highlighted in the map below.



Attachment A

Within this area, there are approximately 1,375 parcels with approximately 1,000 parcels without sidewalk. Of the parcels without sidewalks, about 75 percent (approximately 750) are located on north/south-oriented streets. Staff recommends that the program be available to all parcels in the pilot area; however, with priority given to those properties located on north/south-oriented streets in the event there is more demand for the program than the budget allows.

Program Options

During the January 6th agenda item, staff presented several program concepts for City Council consideration. The City Council suggested that the program be as simple as possible. The City Council gave direction to staff to provide additional information on a graduated matching program in which the City's match would increase as levels of participation increase. In addition to the options presented, the idea of a decomposed granite pathway was discussed by the City Council. In response to that discussion, staff has included additional information about this concept as well.

During the January 6th meeting, it was acknowledged that the sidewalk program would likely results in a sidewalk network with many disconnections—a hodge-podge of sidewalk segments. In the end, this idea was acceptable with the notion that the program would be the first step needed to ultimately developing a complete sidewalk network. In further analyzing the pilot program options, staff identified several significant challenges in developing sidewalks in this way.

First, staff is concerned about potential drainage problems and liability that could be created unintentionally from small portions of sidewalks being installed without connection to the City's stormwater system. For example, if three property owners on a block of 10 parcels opt to develop curb, gutter and sidewalk, the water collected in the newly installed gutter may not necessarily lead to a stormwater inlet. Staff is concerned that water conveyed by the new gutter could cause private property damage, resulting in liability for the City. Based on this discovery, staff presents an alternative option (Option 2) for further discussion.

Second, staff is concerned that developing sidewalks piecemeal may not resolve the problem of overhead utilities. The City can rely on 20A funds to pay for undergrounding costs if a minimum of 600 linear feet (approximately 10 to 12 parcels) of sidewalk is being installed as part of a project. If the project is under the 600 foot minimum, the 20A funds are not available.

Third, staff is concerned that developing sidewalks piecemeal could create non-uniform street widths, creating potential liability for the City. For example, if three property owners opt to develop sidewalk and dedicate right-of-way to the width determined by the General Plan, the lane width in front of those properties may be wider than non-participating properties. This non-uniform lane width could create some liability exposure to the City in the event of an accident.

The following subsections outline the two potential pilot program concepts.

Option 1 – the first option relies on City Council feedback from January 6th. In this program, the City would offer varying matches to property owners that wish to install sidewalk. The program would require the participating property owner to obtain a title report to verify that there are no underlying easements (approximately \$500) and dedicate public right-of-way required for the sidewalk, in the event the right-of-way is insufficient. It would also require the participating property owner to remove, at their own expense, any vegetation or structures located in the path of the future sidewalk.

Using a City match to incentivize greater lengths of sidewalks to be installed, staff recommends a graduated match schedule. Staff recommends that the City provide no match for a single parcel participant, a match of 33 percent for two to four parcels, 50 percent for five or more

Attachment A

parcels, and an additional 10 percent if all the parcel owners on a block participate in the program (block sizes in the pilot area range from three parcels to twelve parcels. Staff recommends that parcels located on cul-de-sac streets not be eligible initially to participate in the program, since the goal is to increase community connectivity.

The cost to install a standard sidewalk, curb, gutter, and driveway apron in front of a single parcel ranges between \$6,000 and \$9,000—this includes surveying, engineering, contractor mobilization, traffic control, potential street widening, and prevailing wage. The cost range does not include significant topographical challenges. As participation increases and the length of sidewalk increases, the cost per parcel decreases. Staff prepared a financial analysis, summarized in the table below, determining the City's cost for this type of program.

Parcel Participants	Total Project Cost	City's Cost (Match)	City's Cost (Bonus Match*)
1	9,000	0	0
2	17,000	5,610	0
3	24,000	7,920	2,400
4	30,000	9,900	3,000
5	35,000	17,500	3,500
6	36,000	18,000	3,600
7	42,000	21,000	4,200
8	48,000	24,000	4,800
9	54,000	27,000	5,400
10	60,000	30,000	6,000
11	66,000	33,000	6,600
12	72,000	36,000	7,200

*Assumes 100 percent participation on a block

In this option, staff recommends that if obvious stormwater, utility pole, or traffic challenges are identified, the project could not move forward until the challenge is resolved—likely through greater participation so an entire block is completed.

With a budget of \$100,000 for this program, the City could potentially incentivize the installation of sidewalks in front of more than 25 parcels. Staff is uncertain whether the matches identified in this option would provide sufficient incentive to property owners to invest in sidewalk projects.

Option 2 – considering staff's concern about the creation of unintended drainage problems, staff presents a second option for consideration. Staff recommends this program also require participating property owners to dedicate required public right-of-way and to remove any vegetation or structures located in the path of the future sidewalk. Staff also recommends that parcels located on cul-de-sac streets be initially ineligible to participate in the program.

Through this program, staff recommends that when at least half of the property owners of a block segment agree to participate in installing sidewalk, the City would install curb and gutter along the entire block segment. As the curb and gutter is installed, participating property owners would pay for the install of their driveway aprons and between 75 percent and 85 percent of the sidewalk installation costs. The City would pay for 15 percent of sidewalk installation costs for two to four parcels and 25 percent of sidewalk installation cost for five or more parcels. Those unwilling to participate would have the option to install sidewalk at a later time, after obtaining an encroachment permit from the City. The incentive to participate in the initial phase of the project is to take advantage of the City's match.

Attachment A

Staff acknowledges that this option creates voids in the sidewalk network. However, the drainage issues are resolved initially and the ability to add sidewalk at a later date is an option for property owners.

Staff prepared a fiscal analysis, summarized in the table below, determining the City's cost for this type of program.

Parcel Participants	Total Project Cost	Owner Cost (Sidewalk & Apron)	City's Curb/Gutter Costs	City's Sidewalk Cost	City's Total Cost
1	9,000	1,000	3,000	0	0
2	17,000	2,000	6,000	1,350	7,350
3	24,000	3,000	8,250	1,913	10,163
4	30,000	4,000	11,000	2,250	13,250
5	35,000	5,000	13,750	4,063	17,813
6	36,000	6,000	15,000	3,750	18,750
7	42,000	7,000	17,500	4,375	21,875
8	48,000	8,000	20,000	5,000	25,000
9	54,000	9,000	22,500	5,625	28,125
10	60,000	10,000	25,000	6,250	31,250
11	66,000	11,000	27,500	6,875	34,375
12	72,000	12,000	30,000	7,500	37,500

In this option, the concern about stormwater liability is resolved; however, vacant portions of sidewalk still remain an issue. Assuming a budget of \$100,000, this program could also incentivize the installation of sidewalk in front of approximately 25 parcels.

Decomposed Granite Sidewalk

During the January 6th meeting, the notion of crushed or decomposed granite (DG) as a sidewalk material was raised. Staff has researched the cost and pros/cons of using DG for a sidewalk. In short, DG sidewalk material is less expensive than cement. However, installation of DG is more labor intensive than cement. Further, DG pathways have higher maintenance costs, lower longevity, and inferior functionality than cement. Staff has identified an alternative material to DG and cement, which is further discussed in this section.

Staff recently inspected a DG sidewalk in an unincorporated area of El Cajon. Along Granite Hills Drive, the sidewalk network includes curb and gutter, cement driveway aprons and DG walkways (see photo below). The DG sidewalk seemed functional and is used frequently because of its proximity to a high school.



Attachment A

In preparing for this staff report, staff spoke with staff from the City of Poway. Poway has traditionally used DG for a pathway material. However, because DG erodes easily, does not hold up well to heavy foot traffic, and generated frequent calls for repair, Poway began using crushed aggregate base (CAB). CAB is less expensive than DG and has a longer maintenance life. The material is initially rough, but breaks down to a more compact surface over time.

Staff compared the cost of a DG, CAB, and cement sidewalk. If the City Council were to consider installing DG or CAB sidewalks, staff recommends a similar development plan to Granite Hills Drive (cement curb, gutter, and driveway aprons). Using this development plan and a standard sidewalk along the 60-foot frontage of a typical parcel, the following table compares the initial installation cost of various sidewalk materials. These project costs assume the development area is relatively level with the ability to connect to an existing drainage system and does not include surveying and engineering costs.

	DG	CAB	Cement
Curb & Gutter	3,000	3,000	3,000
Driveway Apron	1,000	1,000	1,000
Sidewalk Material & Labor	1,530	440	1,600
TOTAL	5,530	4,440	5,600

The cost of installing DG and cement sidewalks, after considering installation, are not much different. After factoring in maintenance cost, cement sidewalks are overall less expensive. The CAB material is 20 percent less than cement.

Next Steps

If the City Council decides to move forward with a sidewalk incentive pilot program, staff recommends establishing a budget of \$50,000 for the program, using *TransNet* funds. Staff would create marketing materials about the program and mail the material to all eligible property owners in the pilot program area. In the marketing material, staff would offer to meet with individual property owners or with groups. The marketing campaign would cost approximately \$500 for printing and mailing.

Conclusion:

Staff recommends that the City Council provide direction regarding the establishment of a sidewalk incentive pilot program.